
Unit 5: Briefings

Unit Objectives

At the end of this unit, the students should be able to:

- Describe components of field, staff, and section briefings/meetings.
- Give an operational period briefing.

Scope

- Unit Introduction
- Unit Objectives
- Types of Briefings
- Briefing Information
- Operational Period Briefing
- Activity
- Summary

Methodology

This lesson uses a combination of instructor presentations and discussion questions. The content begins by reviewing the types of briefings. The instructor will facilitate an activity to identify the types of information included in common types of briefings. The next area covers the purpose and agenda for the operational period briefing. The final activity allows the students to apply what they have learned in this lesson through simulated briefings.

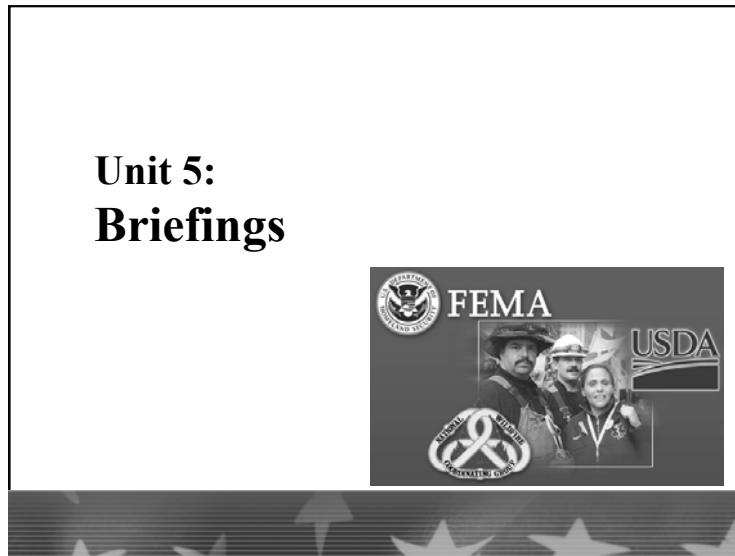
Time Plan

A suggested time plan for this unit is shown below. More or less time may be required, based on the experience level of the group.

Topic	Time
Unit Introduction Unit Objectives Types of Briefings	5 minutes
Briefing Information	5 minutes
Operational Period Briefing	15 minutes
Activity: Operational Period Briefing	60 minutes
Summary	5 minutes
Time	1 hour 30 minutes



Visual 5.1



Visual Description: Unit Introduction

Instructor Notes

Tell the participants that the purpose of this unit is to familiarize them with different types of briefings and meetings. The activity at the end of the unit will provide an opportunity to practice presenting an effective operational briefing.

Topic

Unit Objectives



Visual 5.2

Unit Objectives

- Describe components of field, staff, and section briefings/meetings.
- Give an operational period briefing.

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Visual 5.2

Visual Description: Unit Objectives

Instructor Notes

Review the unit objectives with the class. Tell the participants that by the end of this unit, they should be able to:

- Describe components of field, staff, and section briefings/meetings.
- Give an operational period briefing.

Topic

Types of Briefings



Visual 5.3

Types of Briefings/Meetings



Staff-Level Briefings: Delivered to resources assigned to nonoperational and support tasks at the Incident Command Post or Base.



Field-Level Briefings: Delivered to individual resources or crews assigned to operational tasks and/or work at or near the incident site.



Section-Level Briefings: Delivered to an entire Section (e.g., the operational period briefing).

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Visual 5.3

Visual Description: Type of Briefings/Meetings

Instructor Notes

Present the following key points:

- Briefings are an essential element to good supervision and incident management. These short, concise meetings are intended to pass along vital information that will be used specifically by the recipient in the completion of his or her job. Typically, these briefings do not include long discussions or complex decisionmaking. Rather, they allow for the individual manager or supervisor to pass along specific information and expectations for the upcoming work period and to field questions from subordinates related to that information and the supervisor's expectations.
- In the ICS, these briefings occur at various levels in the organization, with topics that tend to be unique to that level. The ICS uses various levels of organizational briefings/meetings.
- Examples of the three levels of briefings include:
 - **Staff-Level Briefings:** Delivered to resources assigned to nonoperational and support tasks at the Incident Command Post or Base.
 - **Field-Level Briefings:** Delivered to individual resources or crews assigned to operational tasks and/or work at or near the incident site.
 - **Section-Level Briefings:** Delivered to an entire Section (for example, the operational period briefing).

Refer the participants to the table in their Student Manuals that summarizes information about the different types of briefings.

(Continued on next page.)

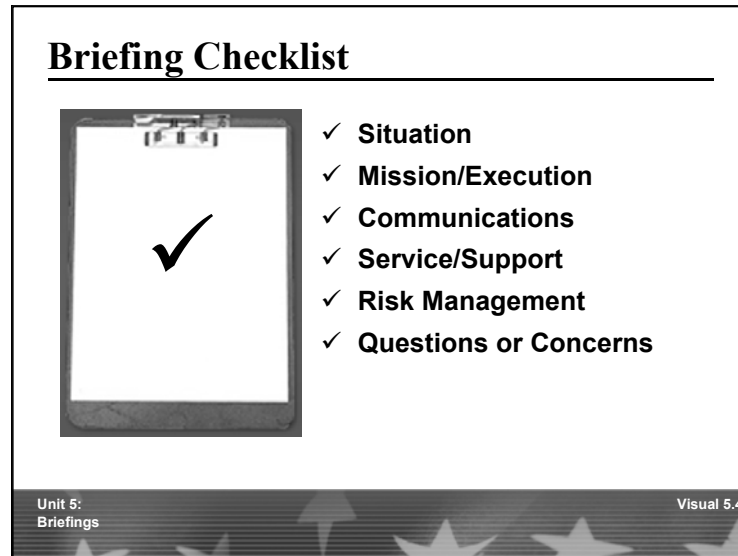
Topic

Types of Briefings

Briefing Type	Description
Field-Level Briefings	<p>This level typically involves resources assigned to operational tasks and/or work at or near the incident site. These briefings will be delivered to individual subordinates, full crews, or multiple crews such as Strike Teams or Task Forces and will occur at the beginning of an operational shift.</p> <p>The location will usually be near the work site or just prior to mobilization to the field. The supervisor attempts to focus the subordinates on their specific tasks and helps define work area, reporting relationships, and expectations.</p>
Staff-Level Briefings	<p>This level typically involves resources assigned to nonoperational and support tasks that are commonly performed at the Incident Base or Command Post. These briefings will be delivered to individual staff members or full units within a Section. These briefings occur at the beginning of the assignment to the incident and as necessary during the assignment.</p> <p>The supervisor attempts to clarify tasks and scope of the work as well as define reporting schedule, subordinate responsibilities and delegated authority, and the supervisor's expectations. The supervisor will also introduce coworkers and define actual workspace, sources of work supplies, and work schedule.</p>
Section-Level Briefing	<p>This level typically involves the briefing of an entire Section (Operations, Planning, Logistics, or Finance/Administration) and is done by the specific Section Chief. These briefings occur at the beginning of the assignment to the incident and after the arrival of Section supervisory staff. The Section Chief may schedule periodic briefings at specific times (once per day) or when necessary. A unique briefing in this category is the operational period briefing (also called a shift briefing). Here, the Operations Section Chief presents the plan for all operational elements for the specific operational period. This specific briefing is done at the beginning of each operation shift and prior to the operational resources being deployed to the area of work. Often, a field-level briefing will take place subsequent to the completion of the operational period briefing.</p> <p>During any Section-level briefing, the supervisor attempts to share incident-wide direction from the Incident Commander, how the direction impacts the Section staff, and specific ways the Section will support the Incident Commander's direction. The supervisor will establish Section staffing requirements, Section work tasks, Section-wide scheduling rules, and overall timelines for meetings and completion of work products.</p>



Visual 5.4



Visual Description: Briefing Checklist

Instructor Notes

Explain that most briefings will include the following elements:

- Situation
- Mission/Execution
- Communications
- Service/Support
- Risk Management
- Questions or Concerns



Visual 5.5

Activity: Briefing Information

Instructions:

1. Each group will be assigned one type of briefing (staff, field, section).
2. For the assigned type of briefing, list the specific types of information that you think should be in briefings. You may want to refer to the two previous visuals.
3. Choose a spokesperson to present your findings to the class. Be ready to present your list in 15 minutes.

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Visual 5.5

Visual Description: Briefing Information Activity

Instructor Notes

Present the following instructions to the participants:

1. Each group will be assigned one type of briefing (staff, field, section).
2. For the assigned type of briefing, list the specific types of information that you think should be in briefings. You may want to refer to the two previous visuals.
3. Choose a spokesperson to present your findings to the class. Be ready to present your list in 15 minutes.

Monitor the time. After 15 minutes, call time.

Conduct the activity discussion as follows:

1. Ask each spokesperson to present the team's list of information.
2. Compare the similarities and differences among the lists.
3. Summarize the main learning points from this activity.



Visual 5.6

Staff-Level Briefing Topics

- Work area
- Safety issues and emergency procedures
- Specific tasks for the work period
- Coworkers, subordinates
- Process to obtain additional resources, supplies, and equipment
- Shift or work period schedule
- Communications protocol within the unit
- Expectations:
 - Meeting attendance and schedule
 - Quantity and quality of work
 - Timelines
 - Schedule for updates and completed products



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Visual 5.6

Visual Description: Staff-Level Briefing Topics

Instructor Notes

Note: These visuals are not in the Student Manual. Use this visual to compare the items identified by the participants in the previous activity.



Visual 5.7

Field-Level Briefing Topics

- Work area
- Scope of responsibility
- Safety issues and emergency procedures
- Specific tasks for the work period
- Communication channels and protocols
- Coworkers, subordinates, supervisor, and adjoining forces
- Process to obtain additional resources, supplies, and equipment
- Shift or work period schedule
- Expectations



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Visual 5.7

Visual Description: Field-Level Briefing Topics

Instructor Notes

Note: These visuals are not in the Student Manual. Use this visual to compare the items identified by the participants in the previous activity.



Visual 5.8

Section-Level Briefing Topics

- Scope of work assigned to the Section
- Section organization
- Work site/area/facility layout
- Safety issues and emergency procedures
- Staff introductions
- Section meetings schedule
- Process to obtain additional resources, supplies, and equipment
- Expectations
- Scope of responsibility and delegated authority

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Visual 5.8

Visual Description: Section-Level Briefing Topics

Instructor Notes

Note: These visuals are not in the Student Manual. Use this visual to compare the items identified by the participants in the previous activity.



Visual 5.9

Operational Period Briefing

The operational period briefing:

- May be referred to as the shift briefing.
- Is conducted at the beginning of each operational period.
- Presents the Incident Action Plan to supervisors within the Operations Section.
- Should be concise.



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Visual 5.9

Visual Description: Operational Period Briefing

Instructor Notes

Explain that the operational period briefing:

- May be referred to as the shift briefing.
- Is conducted at the beginning of each operational period.
- Allows the Operations Section Chief to present the Incident Action Plan (IAP) for the shift to personnel with supervisory responsibility in the Operations Section.
- Includes a large group assembly of the operational resources that are committed to the incident.
- Should be concise and to the point.

In addition to the Operations Section Chief, the other members of the Command and General Staffs as well as specific support elements (e.g., Communications Unit, Medical Unit) can provide important information needed for safe and effective performance during the shift.

Topic

Operational Period Briefing



Visual 5.10

Operational Period Briefing: Agenda (1 of 4)

- **Planning Section Chief:** Reviews the agenda and facilitates the briefing.
- **Incident Commander:** Presents incident objectives or confirms existing objectives.

Note: Objectives may be presented by the Planning Section Chief.

Unit 5: Briefings Visual 5.10

Visual Description: Operational Period Briefing: Agenda (1 of 4)

Instructor Notes

Explain that the briefing is facilitated by the Planning Section Chief and follows a set agenda.

An example of a widely used agenda is presented on this and the following visuals.

- The **Planning Section Chief** reviews the agenda and facilitates the briefing.
- The **Incident Commander** (or Planning Section Chief) presents incident objectives or confirms existing objectives if still valid.



Topic

Operational Period Briefing



Visual 5.11

Operational Period Briefing: Agenda (2 of 4)

-  **Current Operations Section Chief:** Provides current assessment and accomplishments.
-  **On-Coming Operations Section Chief:** Covers the work assignments and staffing of divisions and groups for the upcoming operational period.

Unit 5: Briefings Visual 5.11

Visual Description: Operational Period Briefing: Agenda (2 of 4)

Instructor Notes

Continue reviewing the agenda items:

- The **Current Operations Section Chief** provides current assessment and accomplishments.
- The **On-Coming Operations Section Chief** covers the work assignments and staffing of Divisions and Groups for the upcoming operational period.




Topic

Operational Period Briefing



Visual 5.12

Operational Period Briefing: Agenda (3 of 4)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Technical Specialists: Present updates on conditions affecting the response (weather, fire behavior, environmental factors).
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Safety Officer: Reviews specific risks to operational resources and the identified safety/mitigation measures.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Special Operations: Briefs on Air Operations (if activated).

Unit 5: Briefings Visual 5.12

Visual Description: Operational Period Briefing: Agenda (3 of 4)

Instructor Notes

Continue reviewing the agenda items:

- **Technical Specialists** present updates on conditions affecting the response (weather, fire behavior, environmental factors).
- The **Safety Officer** reviews specific risks to operational resources and the identified safety/mitigation measures.
- **Special Operations** briefs on Air Operations (if activated).

Topic

Operational Period Briefing



Visual 5.13

Operational Period Briefing: Agenda (4 of 4)

- **Specific Section Chief/Unit Leaders:** Present information related to ensuring safe and efficient operations.



- **Incident Commander:** Reiterates his or her operational concerns and directs resources to deploy.



- **Planning Section Chief:** Announces next planning meeting and operational period briefing. Adjourns the meeting.

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Visual 5.13

Visual Description: Operational Period Briefing: Agenda (4 of 4)

Instructor Notes

Continue reviewing the agenda items:

- **Specific Section Chief/Unit Leaders** present information related to ensuring safe and efficient operations.
- The **Incident Commander** reiterates his or her operational concerns and directs resources to deploy.
- The **Planning Section Chief** announces the next planning meeting and operational period briefing, and then adjourns the meeting.

Topic

Activity



Visual 5.14

Activity: Operational Period Briefing**Instructions:**

1. Working as a team, prepare an operational period briefing using the information from the Emerald City Flood scenario begun in the previous units.
2. Include the following roles:
 - Incident Commander
 - Planning Section Chief
 - Operations Section Chief (assume no change of command)
 - Safety Officer
 - Weather Specialist
3. Be prepared to present your briefing in 20 minutes.

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Visual 5.14

Visual Description: Operational Period Briefing Activity**Instructor Notes**

Present the following instructions to the participants:

1. Working as a team, prepare an operational period briefing using the information from the Emerald City Flood scenario begun in the previous units.
2. Include the following roles:
 - Incident Commander
 - Planning Section Chief
 - Operations Section Chief (assume no change of command)
 - Safety Officer
 - Weather Specialist
3. Be prepared to present your briefing in 20 minutes.

Monitor the time. After 20 minutes, call time.

Pair up two teams together. Have the teams take turns presenting the briefings to each other as follows:

Round 1

- Team 1: Present the operational period briefing.
- Team 2: Participate as resources being briefed. Ask questions as appropriate.

Round 1 Feedback

- Team 1 Self-Assessment: Strengths of Presentation and Areas for Improvement
- Team 2 Peer Feedback
- Instructor Feedback

Round 2

Reverse roles and have Team 2 present and Team 1 play the role of the resources being briefed.

Topic

Summary



Visual 5.15

Summary

Are you now able to:

- Describe components of field, staff, and section briefings/meetings?
- Give an operational period briefing?



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Visual 5.15

Visual Description: Summary

Instructor Notes

Ask the participants if they are now able to:

- Describe components of field, staff, and section briefings/meetings.
- Give an operational period briefing.

Next, ask the participants if they have any questions about the content presented in this unit.

Answer any questions. Then explain that the next unit presents information about the modular organization of the Incident Command System and explains the concepts of resource typing and incident complexity typing.

Your Notes